

COURT INTERPRETER COMMISSION
FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 2010
11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
TELEPHONIC MEETING

Members Present: Justice Susan Owens, Leticia Camacho, Emma Garkavi, Dirk Marler, Frank Maiocco, Mike McElroy, Judge Gregory Sypolt

AOC Staff: Katrin Johnson

I. General Business

With one edit, the 2010 April meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

II. Update on Interpreter Oath

Work has been done to bring certified and registered interpreters into compliance with the new oath requirement. Seattle Municipal Court hosted a swearing-in ceremony attended by approximately twenty interpreters. Judge Sypolt officiated over a telephonic hearing for an interpreter who was too ill to leave her home and take the oath.

There is still confusion among judges as to which interpreters are already sworn, and what steps they must take. Efforts should be taken to educate judges through the judicial associations or conferences to standardize practices.

The court interpreter bench card should be updated with the new oath information.

III. Judicial and Court Manager Education Committee

The Education Committee has met and decided to revise the Judicial Reference Guide on interpreters. The current Guide is very basic, and while it is good, there are newly developed resources from other states that have additional topics/information from which we can draw. The Guide will contain practical recommendations and advice. The Education Committee will approve drafts of sections as they are developed, and bring them to the Commission for further edits and review. Finalized sections may be posted online as they are completed, but it is intended to print copies of the final Guide and make them available at the 2011 judicial associations' annual conferences. A general outline of the topics/sections has been developed.

IV. Minority Boards/Commissions Workgroup Update

As discussed at the last meeting, Justice Madsen convened this group to address the work being done by various judicial branch boards and commissions to eliminate barriers from accessing justice. The group met for five days and is working on its final draft report. The workgroup appreciates the robust work of the many boards/commissions, but identified that improvements are needed in communication, collaboration and fostering joint projects. The group recommends the creation of a council to include representatives of each group. The final report is expected to be completed in mid-September.

V. Business and Operations Tax Update

There have been continued conversations in Kitsap County regarding the Business and Operations tax that is being required of court interpreters working at Bremerton Municipal Court. The City of Port Orchard had been considering adopting the same policy for revenue purposes. Frank and Judge Riehl have spoken locally on the topic. It will continue to be the policy in Bremerton, but was not adopted in Port Orchard. It has not impacted the availability of interpreters in Kitsap Superior and District Courts. There has been no reported news of the tax being imposed elsewhere in the state.

VI. Upcoming WASCLA Conference

The sixth annual WASCLA (Washington State Coalition for Language Access) conference will occur October 15-16 in Shoreline. Registration will open soon.

VII. Membership

Kristi Cruz, an attorney employed by the Seattle University School of Law to manage an ABA-sponsored project on language access standards for courts, applied for the open public member position on the Interpreter Commission. Her application was approved by a unanimous vote. Mike's position is also up and no other applicants have been submitted. He will serve a second three-year term.

Emma's position as interpreter representative expires September 30, and she announced that she will step down. She intends on continuing to work with the Commission, and the Judicial Reference Guide in particular.

Next Meeting:

Friday, November 5, 2010
11:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
AOC SeaTac Office